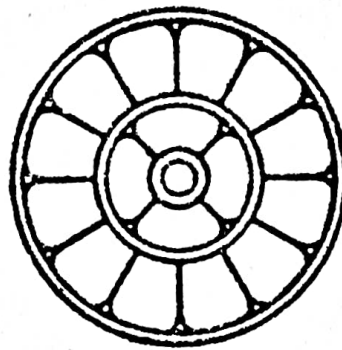
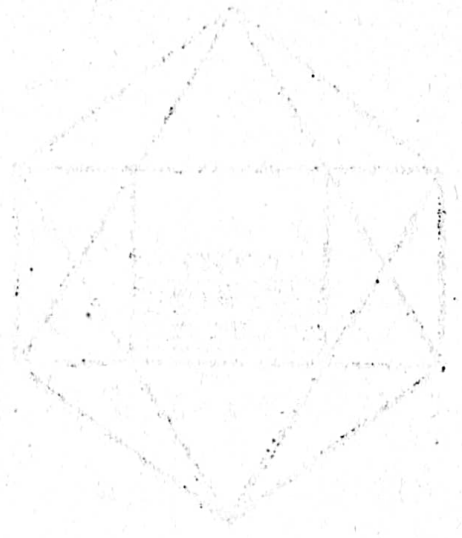


ALL INDIA MAGAZINE

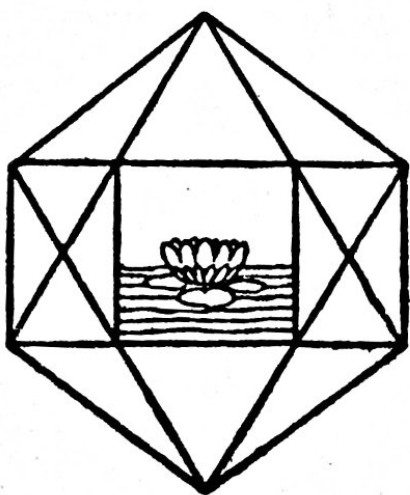


April 1973



***The help is always there.
It is you who must keep your receptivity living.
The divine help is much vaster than any human
being is able to receive.***

The Mother



All India Magazine

—Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face.

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While it is necessary to take full cognisance of the material aspect of our life and recognise the importance of the bodily existence as the basis for healthy and wholesome progress it is absolutely essential to dive deep into the truths of the spirit within for a truly integral advancement towards the future evolution of man. Not to see and study nature with its substance and form and law would result in poorness of our outer life; but not to know and possess the spirit within would mean suicide. Sri Aurobindo's vision of Reality opens to us a vast scope of study for the development of our perspective and also for real preparation and effective accomplishment of perfection in life.

In the present issue of the AIM are given some selections which bear closely on a complete affirmation of material nature here as the very expression of the Spirit Beyond and a corresponding synthesis of man's sadhana through his knowledge and love and will, all directed towards the Supreme. Consistently needed, there are given also deeply inspiring and effectively guiding words of the Mother on practical spirituality and self-perfecting culture.

The Editor

MEDITATION

All nature salutes Thee, O Lord, and with arms raised and hands outstretched, she implores Thee. Not that she doubts Thy infinite generosity or thinks that she must ask in order to obtain; but it is her way of saluting and giving herself to Thee, for is this self-giving anything else than her readiness to receive? It is sweet to her to turn to Thee in prayer, though she knows that prayer is superfluous. But it is an ardent and happy adoration. And her feeling of devotion is satisfied without any harm done to the intellectual consciousness which knows Thee to be one with all and present in all.

But all veils must disappear and the light become complete in all hearts.

O Lord, in spite of the work and in it, give us the perfect calm of the spirit which makes possible the divine identification, the integral knowledge.

My love for Thee, O Lord, it is Thyself and yet my love bows down religiously before Thee.

The Mother
(Prayers And Meditations, June 28, 1914)

MEANING OF HERE AND BEYOND

If the materialist is justified from his point of view in insisting on Matter as Reality, the relative world as the sole thing of which we can in some sort be sure and the Beyond as wholly unknowable, if not indeed non-existent, a dream of the mind, an abstraction of Thought divorcing itself from reality, so also is the Sannyasin, enamoured of that Beyond, justified from his point of view in insisting on pure Spirit as the reality, the one thing free from change, birth, death, and the relative as a creation of the mind and the senses, a dream, an abstraction in the contrary sense of mentality withdrawing from the pure and eternal Knowledge.

What justification, of logic or of experience, can be asserted in support of the one extreme which cannot be met by an equally cogent logic and an equally valid experience at the other end? The world of Matter is affirmed by the experience of the physical senses which, because they are themselves unable to perceive anything immaterial or not organised as gross Matter, would persuade us that the suprasensible is the unreal. This vulgar or rustic error of our corporeal organs does not gain in validity by being promoted into the domain of philosophical reasoning. Obviously, their pretension is unfounded. Even in the world of Matter there are existences of which the physical senses are incapable of taking cogni-

sance. Yet the denial of the suprasensible as necessarily an illusion or a hallucination depends on this constant sensuous association of the real with the materially perceptible, which is itself a hallucination. Assuming throughout what it seeks to establish, it has the vice of the argument in a circle and can have no validity for an impartial reasoning.

Not only are there physical realities which are suprasensible, but, if evidence and experience are at all a test of Truth, there are also senses which are supraphysical and cannot only take cognisance of the realities of the material world without the aid of the corporeal sense-organs, but can bring us into contact with other realities, supraphysical and belonging to another world—included, that is to say, in an organisation of conscious experiences that are dependent on some other principle than the gross Matter of which our suns and earths seem to be made.

* * *

Consciousness is the great underlying fact, the universal witness for whom the world is a field, the senses instruments. To that witness the worlds and their objects appeal for their reality and for the one world or the many, for the physical equally with the supraphysical we have no other evidence that they exist.

* * *

Entering into that Consciousness, we may continue to dwell, like It, upon universal existence.

Then we become aware—for all our terms of consciousness and even our sensational experience begin to change,—of Matter as one existence and of bodies as its formations in which the one existence separates itself physically in the single body from itself in all others and again by physical means establishes communication between these multitudinous points of its being. Mind, we experience similarly, and Life also, as the same existence one in its multiplicity, separating and reuniting itself in each domain by means appropriate to that movement. And, if we choose, we can proceed farther and, after passing through many linking stages, become aware of a supermind whose universal operation is the key to all lesser activities. Nor do we become merely conscious of this cosmic existence but likewise conscious in it, receiving it in sensation, but also entering into it in awareness. In it we live as we lived before in the ego - sense, active, more and more in contact, even unified more and more with other minds, other lives, other bodies than the organism we call ourselves, producing effects not only on our own moral and mental being and on the subjective being of others, but even on the physical world and its events by means nearer to the divine than those possible to our egoistic capacity.

Real then to the man who has had contact with it or lives in it, is this cosmic consciousness, with a greater than the physical reality; real in itself, real

in its effects and works. And as it is thus real to the world which is its own total expression, so is the world real to it; but not as an independent existence. For in that higher and less hampered experience we perceive that consciousness and being are not different from each other, but all being is a supreme consciousness, all consciousness is self-existence, eternal in itself, real in its works and neither a dream nor an evolution. The world is real precisely because it exists only in consciousness, for it is a Conscious Energy one with Being that creates it. It is the existence of material form in its own right apart from the self-illuminated energy which assumes the form, that would be a contradiction of the truth of things, a phantasmagoria, a nightmare, an impossible falsehood.

But this conscious Being which is the truth of the infinite supermind, is more than the universe and lives independently in Its own inexpressible infinity as well as in the cosmic harmonies. World lives by that; That does not live by the world. And as we can enter into the cosmic consciousness and be one with all cosmic existence, so we can enter into the world-transcending consciousness and become superior to all cosmic existence.

* * *

We seek indeed a larger and completer affirmation. We perceive that in the Indian ascetic ideal the great Vedantic formula, "One without a second,"

has not been read sufficiently in the light of that other formula equally imperative, "All this is the Brahman." The passionate aspiration of man upward to the Divine has not been sufficiently related to the descending movement of the Divine leaning downward to embrace eternally Its manifestation. Its meaning in Matter has not been so well understood as Its truth in the Spirit. The reality which the Sannyasin seeks has been grasped in its full height, but not, as by the ancient Vedantins, in its full extent and comprehensiveness. But in our completer affirmation we must not minimise the part of the pure spiritual impulse. As we have seen how greatly Materialism has served the ends of the Divine, so we must acknowledge the still greater service rendered by Asceticism to Life. We shall preserve the truths of material Science and its real utilities in the final harmony, even if many or even if all of its existing forms have to be broken or left aside. And even greater scruple of right preservation must guide us in our dealing with the legacy, however actually diminished or depreciated, of the Aryan past.

Sri Aurobindo

(The Life Divine, Cent. Edn. pp. 17-24)

THE TRIPLE PATH

The triple Path of devotion, knowledge and works attempts the province which Rajayoga leaves unoccupied. It differs from Rajayoga in that it does not occupy itself with the elaborate training of the whole mental system as the condition of perfection, but seizes on certain central principles, the intellect, the heart, the will, and seeks to convert their normal operations by turning them away from their ordinary and external preoccupations and activities and concentrating them on the divine. It differs also in this,—and here from the point of view of an integral Yoga there seems to be a defect,—that it is indifferent to mental and bodily perfection and aims only at purity as a condition of the divine realisation. A second defect is that as actually practised it chooses one of the three parallel paths exclusively and almost in antagonism to the others instead of effecting a synthetic harmony of the intellect, the heart and the will in an integral divine realisation.

The path of Knowledge aims at the realisation of the unique and supreme Self. It proceeds by the method of intellectual reflection, *vicara*, to right discrimination, *viveka*. It observes and distinguishes the different elements of our apparent or phenomenal being and rejecting identification with each of them arrives at their exclusion and separation in one common term as constituents of Prakriti, of phenom-

enal Nature, creations of Maya, the phenomenal consciousness. So it is able to arrive at its right identification with the pure and unique Self which is not mutable or perishable, not determinable by any phenomenon or combination of phenomena. From this point the path, as ordinarily followed, leads to the rejection of the phenomenal worlds from the consciousness as an illusion and the final emergence without return of individual soul in the Supreme.

But this exclusive consummation is not the sole or inevitable result of the Path of Knowledge. For, followed more largely and with a less individual aim, the method of Knowledge may lead to an active conquest of the cosmic existence for the Divine no less than to a transcendence. The point of this departure is the realisation of the supreme Self not only in one's own being but in all beings and, finally, the realisation of even the phenomenal aspects of the world as a play of the divine consciousness and not something entirely alien to its true nature. And on the basis of this realisation a yet further enlargement is possible, the conversion of all forms of knowledge, however mundane, into activities of the divine consciousness utilisable for the perception of the one and unique Object of knowledge both in itself and through the play of its forms and symbols. Such a method might well lead to the elevation of the whole range of human intellect and perception to

the divine level, to its spiritualisation and to the justification of the cosmic travail of knowledge in humanity.

The Path of Devotion aims at the enjoyment of the supreme Love and Bliss and utilises normally the conception of the supreme Lord in His personality as the divine Lover and enjoyer of the universe. The world is then realised as a play of the Lord, with our human life as its final stage, pursued through the different stages of self-concealment and self-revelation. The principle of Bhakti Yoga is to utilise all the normal relations of human life into which emotion enters and apply them no longer to transient worldly relations, but to the joy of the All-Loving, the All-Beautiful and the All-Bliss. Worship and meditation are used only for the preparation and increase of intensity of the divine relationship. And this Yoga is catholic in its use of all emotional relations, so that even enmity and opposition to God, considered as an intense, impatient and perverse form of Love, is conceived as a possible means of realisation and salvation. This path, too, as ordinarily practised, leads away from world-existence to an absorption, of another kind than the Monist's, in the Transcendent and Supra-cosmic.

But here too the exclusive result is not inevitable. The Yoga itself provides a first corrective by not confining the play of divine love to the relation between the supreme Soul and the individual, but

extending it to a common feeling and mutual worship between the devotees themselves united in the same realisation of the Supreme Love and Bliss. It provides a yet more general corrective in the realisation of the divine object of Love in all beings not only human but animal, easily extended to all forms whatsoever. We can see how this larger application of the Yoga of Devotion may be so used as to lead to the elevation of the whole range of human emotion, sensation and aesthetic perception to the divine level, its spiritualisation and the justification of the cosmic labour towards love and joy in our humanity.

The Path of Works aims at the dedication of every human activity to the supreme Will. It begins by the renunciation of all egoistic aim for our works, all pursuit of action for an interested aim or for the sake of a worldly result. By this renunciation it so purifies the mind and the will that we become easily conscious of the great universal Energy as the true doer of all our actions and the Lord of that Energy as their ruler and director with the individual as only a mask, an excuse, an instrument or, more positively, a conscious centre of action and phenomenal relation. The choice and direction of the act is more and more consciously left to this supreme Will and this universal Energy. To That our works as well as the results of our works are finally abandoned. The object is the release of the soul from its bondage to appearances and to the reaction of phenomenal activities.

Karmayoga is used, like the other paths, to lead to liberation from phenomenal existence and a departure into the Supreme. But here too the exclusive result is not inevitable. The end of the path may be, equally, a perception of the divine in all energies, in all happenings, in all activities, and a free and unegoistic participation of the soul in the cosmic action. So followed it will lead to the elevation of all human will and activity to the divine level, its spiritualisation and the justification of the cosmic labour towards freedom, power and perfection in the human being.

We can see also that in the integral view of things these three paths are one. Divine Love should normally lead to the perfect knowledge of the Beloved by perfect intimacy, thus becoming a path of Knowledge, and to divine service, thus becoming a path of Works. So also should perfect Knowledge lead to perfect Love and Joy and a full acceptance of the works of That which is known; dedicated Works to the entire love of the Master of the Sacrifice and the deepest knowledge of His ways and His being. It is in this triple path that we come most readily to the absolute knowledge, love and service of the One in all beings and in Its entire manifestation.

Sri Aurobindo

(Synthesis of Yoga, University Edn. pp. 31-33)

DESIRE AND ASPIRATION

What is the difference between desire and aspiration and between selfishness and self-realisation?

Desire is a vital movement, aspiration is a psychic movement.

When you have true aspiration, unselfish and sincere, you do not any more put the question; for the vibration of aspiration, luminous and calm, has nothing to do with the vibration of desire that is passionate and dark, often violent.

Selfishness means wanting everything for oneself, understanding nothing but oneself, being busy with others only to the extent that they are necessary for oneself or for the importance they have for oneself. In French self-realisation (*realisation du Soi*) means discovering the divine centre in oneself. In English, self-fulfilment is generally taken in the sense “to be successful”. Sri Aurobindo in his writings used the word “self-realisation” to mean realisation of the self, that is to say, being aware of the Divine in oneself, being identified with Him.

Blessings
The Mother

(Bulletin of Education, Vol. XXIII, No. 1, p. 57)

NO DEPRESSION

The rule in Yoga is not to let the depression depress you, to stand back from it, observe its cause and remove the cause; for the cause is always in oneself, perhaps a vital defect somewhere, a wrong movement indulged or a petty desire causing a recoil, sometimes by its satisfaction, sometimes by its disappointment. In Yoga a desire satisfied, false movement given its head produces very often a worse recoil than disappointed desire.

What is needed for you is to live more happily within, less in the outer vital and mental part which is exposed to these touches. The inmost psychic being is not oppressed by them; it stands in its own closeness to the Divine, and sees the small surface movements as surface things foreign to the true Being.

Sri Aurobindo

(Bases of Yoga, pp. 66-67)

TODAY AND TOMORROW

ABOUT ASPIRATION

What is the difference between mental aspiration, vital aspiration and spiritual aspiration?

In what way do you aspire, aspire on the mental, aspire on the vital or aspire spiritually?

A mental aspiration is the thought power aspiring to have knowledge, for example, or else the power for expression or for clear ideas, for logical reasoning. You can aspire for many things. All the faculties and capacities of the mind should be developed and placed at the service of the Divine. This is a mental aspiration.

Or you may have an aspiration in the vital: if you have desires, troubles, storms, difficulties within you, you aspire to have peace, to be quite impartial, without desire or preference, to be a good docile instrument that has no personal fancies, that is always at the disposal of the Divine. That is a vital aspiration.

You can have also a physical aspiration: the body feels that it must get a kind of equipoise in which all the parts of the being will be held in balance, and you will have the power to keep illness

at a distance or quickly overcome it if it is bad enough to enter into you; and the body must always function normally, harmoniously and in perfect health. That is physical aspiration.

A Spiritual aspiration consists in having an intense need to be one with the Divine, to give oneself wholly to the Divine, not existing outside the divine consciousness, so that it is the Divine that is all in all for you in your integral being, and you feel the want to have a constant union with him, to have the feeling of his presence, of his guidance in all that you do, of his harmonising all the movements of your being. That is the spiritual aspiration.

The Mother

(Bulletin of Education: Vol. XXIII No. 2, p.75)

Desire is a psychological movement, and it can attach itself to a "true need" as well as to things that are not true needs. One must approach even true needs without desire. If one does not get them one must feel nothing.

Sri Aurobindo

THERMOCAUTERY

When you make a mistake, without knowing that it is a mistake, through ignorance, it is evident that as soon as you learn that it is a mistake and your ignorance goes away, you do not commit the mistake any more, provided you have the good will and so come out of the state in which you might do it. But if you know that it is a mistake and still you do it, that means there is something perverse in you, something that has wilfully chosen to be on the side of disorder or bad will or even on the side of anti-divine forces.

It is also evident that if one chooses to be on the side of anti-divine forces or if one is so weak and inconsistent as not to be able to resist the temptation of being with them, then it is infinitely more serious, from the psychological point of view. It means there is something vitiated somewhere: an adverse force is already established in you or you have an innate sympathy for these forces. It is much more difficult to correct that than to correct ignorance.

To correct ignorance means to remove obscurity: you kindle a light, the obscurity disappears. But to repeat a fault which you know to be a fault would be like putting off the light wilfully after you have kin-

dled it. That would be exactly making it dark in a wilful manner, for the argument of weakness does not hold.

The divine Grace is always there to help those who have resolved to correct themselves and they cannot say, "I am too weak to correct myself". They should rather say that they have not yet taken the resolution to correct themselves. Somewhere in the being something there is which has not decided to do it and that is serious.

The argument of weakness is an excuse. The Grace is there to give the supreme force to whomsoever takes the resolution.

This means that there is insincerity, not weakness. And insincerity is always an open door to the adversary. It means that there is a secret sympathy with what is perverted. And that is serious.

When it is a matter of illumining the ignorance, it is sufficient, as I have said, to put on the light, but in the case of conscious relapse what is needed is thermocautery.

The Mother

(Bulletin of Education, Vol. X, No. 3, pp. 91-93)

ABSOLUTE SINCERITY

The most important thing for the purification of the heart is an absolute sincerity. No pretence with oneself, no concealment from the Divine, or oneself, or the Guru, a straight look at one's movements, a straight will to make them straight. It does not so much matter if it takes time: one must be prepared to make it one's whole life-task to seek the Divine. Purifying the heart means after all a pretty considerable achievement and it is no use getting despondent, despairful, etc., because one finds things in oneself that still need to be changed. If one keeps the true will and true attitude, then the intuitions or intimations from within will begin to grow, become clear, precise, unmistakable and the strength to follow them will grow also: and then before even you are satisfied with yourself the Divine will be satisfied with you and begin to withdraw the veil by which he protects himself and his seekers against a premature and perilous grasping of the greatest thing to which humanity can aspire.

Sri Aurobindo

(Letters on Yoga, II, 27)

AS TO PURIFICATION

It is a mistake to dwell too much on the lower nature and its obstacles, which is the negative side of the Sadhana. They have to be seen and purified, but preoccupation with them as the one important thing is not helpful. The positive side of experience of the descent is the more important thing. If one waits for the lower nature to be purified entirely and for all time before calling down the positive experience, one might have to wait for ever. It is true that the more the lower nature is purified, the easier is the descent of the higher Nature, but it is also and more true that the more the higher Nature descends, the more the lower is purified. Neither the complete purification nor the permanent and perfect manifestation can come all at once, it is a matter of time and patient progress. The two (purification and manifestation) go on progressing side by side and become more and more strong to play into each other's hands—that is the usual course of Sadhana.

Sri Aurobindo
(Lights On Yoga, pp.8-9)

INDIVIDUAL AND THE GROUP

It is a constant method of Nature, when she has two elements of a harmony to reconcile, to proceed at first by a long continued balancing in which she sometimes seems to lean entirely on one side, sometimes entirely to the other, at others to correct both excesses by a more or less successful temporary adjustment and moderating compromise. The two elements appear then as opponents necessary to each other who therefore labour to arrive at some conclusion of their strife. But as each has its egoism and that innate tendency of all things which drives them not only towards self-preservation but towards self-assertion in proportion to their available force, they seek each to arrive at a conclusion in which itself shall have the maximum part and dominate utterly if possible or even swallow up entirely the egoism of the other in its own egoism. Thus the progress towards harmony accomplishes itself by a strife of forces and seems often to be no effort towards concord or mutual adjustment at all, but rather towards a mutual devouring. In effect, the swallowing up, not of one by the other, but of each by the other, so that both shall live entirely in the other and as the other, is our highest ideal of oneness. It is the last ideal of love at which strife tries ignorantly to arrive; for by strife one can only arrive at an adjustment of the two opposite demands, not at a stable harmony, a com-

promise between two conflicting egoisms and not the fusing of them into each other. Still, strife does lead to an increasing, mutual comprehension which eventually makes the attempt at real oneness possible.

In the relations between the individual and the group, this constant tendency of Nature appears as the strife between two equally deep-rooted human tendencies, individualism and collectivism. On one side is the engrossing authority, perfection and development of the State, on the other the distinctive freedom, perfection and development of the individual man. The State idea, the small or the vast living machine, and the human idea, the more and more distinct and luminous person, the increasing God, stand in perpetual opposition. The size of the State makes no difference to the essence of the struggle and need make none to its characteristic circumstances. It was the family, the tribe or the city, the *polis*; it became the clan, the caste and the class, the *kula*, the *gens*. It is now the nation. Tomorrow or the day after it may be all mankind. But even then the question will remain poised between man and humanity, between the self-liberating Person and the engrossing collectivity.

Sri Aurobindo

(The Ideal of Human Unity, pp. 29-30)

PURUSHOTTAMA: THE SUPREME DIVINE

“The Supreme is the Purushottama, eternal beyond all manifestations, infinite beyond all limitation by Time or Causality or any of his numberless qualities and features. But this does not mean that in his supreme eternity he is unconnected with all that happens here, cut off from world and Nature, aloof from all these beings. He is the supreme ineffable Brahman, he is impersonal self, he is all personal existences. Spirit here and life and matter, soul and Nature and the works of Nature are aspects and movements of his infinite and eternal existence. He is the supreme transcendent Spirit and all comes into manifestation from him and are his forms and his self-powers. As the one self he is here all-pervasive and equal and impersonal in man and animal and thing and object and every force of Nature. He is the supreme Soul and all souls are tireless flames of this one Soul. All living beings are in their spiritual personality deathless portions of the one Person or Purusha. He is the eternal Master of all manifested existence, Lord of the worlds and their creatures. He is the omnipotent originator of all actions, not bound by his works, and to him go all action and effort and sacrifice. He is in all and all are in him; he has become all and yet too he is above all and not limited by his creations. He is the transcendent Divine; he

descends as the Avatar; he is manifest by his power in the Vibhuti; he is the Godhead secret in every human being. All the gods whom men worship are only personalities and forms and names and mental bodies of the one Divine Existence.

“The Supreme has manifested the world from his spiritual essence and in his own infinite existence and manifested himself too variously in the world. All things are his powers and figures and to the powers and figures of him there is no end, because he himself is infinite. As a pervading and containing impersonal self-existence he informs and sustains equally and without any partiality, preference or attachment to any person or thing or happening or feature all this infinite manifestation in Time and the universe. This pure and equal Self does not act, but supports impartially all the action of things. And yet it is the Supreme, but as the cosmic Spirit and the Time Spirit, who wills and conducts and determines the action of the world through his multitudinous power-to-be, that power of the Spirit which we call Nature. He creates, sustains and destroys his creations. He is seated too in the heart of every living creature and from there as a secret Power in the individual no less than from his universal presence in the cosmos, he originates by force of Nature, manifests some line of his mystery in quality of nature and in executive energy of nature, shapes each thing and being separate-

ly according to its kind and initiates and upholds all action. It is this transcendent first origination from the Supreme and this constant universal and individual manifestation of Him in things and beings which makes the complex character of the cosmos.

“There are always these three eternal states of the Divine Being. There is always and for ever this one eternal immutable self-existence which is the basis and support of existent things. There is always and for ever this Spirit mutable in Nature manifested by her as all these existences. There is always and for ever this transcendent Divine who can be both of these others at once, can be a pure and silent Spirit and at the same time the active soul and life of the cycles of the universe, because he is something other and more than these two whether taken separately or together. In us is the Jiva, a spirit of this Spirit, a conscious power of the Supreme. He is one who carries in his deepest self the whole of the immanent Divine and in Nature lives in the universal Divine, —no temporary creation but an eternal soul acting and moving in the eternal Self, in the eternal Infinite.

“This conscient soul in us can adopt either of these three steps of the Spirit. Man can live here in the mutability of Nature and in that alone. Ignorant of his real self, ignorant of the Godhead within him,

he knows only Nature: he sees her as a mechanical executive and creative Force and sees himself and others as her creations, —egos, separated existences in her universe. It is thus, superficially, that he now lives and, while it is so and until he exceeds this outer consciousness and knows what is within him, all his thought and science can only be a shadow of light thrown upon screens and surfaces. This ignorance is possible, is even imposed, because the God-head within is hidden by the veil of his own power. His greater reality is lost to our view by the completeness with which he has identified himself in a partial appearance with his creations and images and absorbed the created mind in the deceptive workings of his own Nature. And it is possible also because the real, the eternal, the spiritual Nature which is the secret of things in themselves is not manifest in their outward phenomena. The Nature which we see when we look outwards, the Nature which acts in our mind and body and senses is a lower Force, a derivation, a Magician who creates figures of the Spirit but hides the Spirit in its figures, conceals the truth and makes men look upon masks, a Force which is only capable of a sum of secondary and depressed values, not of the full power and glory and ecstasy and sweetness of the manifestation of the Divine. This Nature in us is a Maya of the ego, a tangle of the dualities, a web of ignorance and the three gunas. And so long as the soul of man lives in the surface fact of mind and life

and body and not in his self and spirit, he cannot see God and himself and the world as they really are, cannot overcome this Maya, but must do what he can with its terms and figures.

“It is possible by drawing back from the lower turn of his nature in which man now lives, to awake from this light that is darkness and live in the luminous truth of the eternal and immutable self-existence. Man then is no longer bound up in his narrow prison of personality, no longer sees himself as this little I that thinks and acts and feels and struggles and labours for a little. He is merged in the vast and free impersonality of the pure spirit; he becomes the Brahman; he knows himself as one with the one self in all things. He is no longer aware of ego, no longer troubled by the dualities, no longer feels anguish of grief or disturbance of joy, is no longer shaken by desire, is no longer troubled by sin or limited by virtue. Or if the shadows of these things remain, he sees and knows them only as Nature working in her own qualities and does not feel them to be the truth of himself in which he lives. Nature alone acts and works out her mechanical figures: but the pure spirit is silent, inactive and free. Calm, untouched by her workings, it regards them with a perfect equality and knows itself to be other than these things. This spiritual state brings with it a still peace and freedom but not the dynamic divinity, not the integral per-

fection; it is a great step, but it is not the integral God-knowledge and self-knowledge.

“A perfect perfection comes only by living in the supreme and the whole Divine. Then the soul of man is united with the Godhead of which it is a portion; then it is one with all beings in the self and spirit, one with them both in God and in Nature; then it is not only free but complete, plunged in the supreme felicity, ready for its ultimate perfection. He still sees the self as an eternal and changeless Spirit silently supporting all things; but he sees also Nature no longer as a mere mechanical force that works out things according to the mechanism of the gunas, but as a power of the Spirit and the force of God in manifestation. He sees that the lower Nature is not the inmost truth of the spirit's action; he becomes aware of a highest spiritual nature of the Divine in which is contained the source and the yet to be realised greater truth of all that is imperfectly figured now in mind, life and body. Arisen from the lower mental to this supreme spiritual nature he is delivered there from all ego. He knows himself as a spiritual being, in his essence one with all existences and in his active nature a power of the one Godhead and an eternal soul of the transcendent Infinite. He sees all in God and God in all; he sees all things as Vasudeva. He is delivered from the dualities of joy and grief, from the pleasant and the unpleasant, from desire and dis-

appointment, from sin and virtue. All henceforth is to his conscious sight and sense the will and working of the Divine. He lives and acts as a soul and portion of the universal consciousness and power; he is filled with the transcendent divine delight, a spiritual Ananda. His action becomes the divine action and his status the highest spiritual status.

Sri Aurobindo

(Essays on the Gita, pp. 558-562)

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